HORSFORTH
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER,

1919.

HORSFORTH :
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The Urban District of Horsforth.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH for 1919.

To the Chairman and Councillors.

GENTLEMEN,

The population at the time of the census in 1911 was 9145. It is now estimated to be 9983 for the birth-rate and 9487 for the death-rate, the difference being due to the absence of those belonging to the district still serving in H.M. Forces.

The area comprises 2,801 acres. Lying on the north side of the river Aire, it has on the map an elongated tongue-like shape, the base being north, whilst the tip reaches the line of the Aire, and towards Rodley passes just beyond it. In length it measures 2½ miles, in breadth 2¼ miles.

In elevation there is great variation, viz., from 120ft. above the sea level on the south to an altitude approaching 700ft. on the north.

Most of the boundaries are formed by streams, and the gradients are favourable to good drainage in all directions. The sub-soil, though sandy in places, is of a clayey nature generally. With the exception of a narrow portion extending from West End to Scotland Lane, which is on the coal measure, the district is on millstone grit. Horsforth consists of a village of considerable antiquity, the main street of which—a long straggling one—passes through the centre of the township. From this houses abut in many directions. There are residential portions of larger houses in Newlay and Scotland Lane, and a more industrial area follows the line of

the Woodside Beck. Most of the houses are stone built, from stone quarried in the district. In later years several brick houses, and some of concrete, have been erected. The older houses are commodious and generally of a low rental; some, owing to the porosity of the local stone, are found to be damp; usually, however, the type is good, and there are no houses enclosed in the form of "yards."

The district is well served by railways, the stations of Newlay, Calverley (Mid.), and Horsforth (N.E.R.) lying within the area. The tramway (Leeds to Guiseley) passes through the township.

Electric Light and power is obtained by the Yorkshire Electric Distribution Co., and Gas is supplied by a private company, the Calverley & Horsforth Gas Co.

For many years past the district has been considered healthy. Within its boundaries are the Springfield Convalescent Home, the Dean Head Sanatorium, whilst adjacent are the Cookridge Convalescent Home and the semi-convalescent hospitals, viz., the Ida and the Arthington; and during the past year yet another, the Mitchell Convalescent Hospital, at present being used for consumptive ex-service men, has been established at Knotfield, just over the Rawdon boundary.

The population may conveniently be described as (1) residential, (2) industrial, and (3) agricultural.

(1) Owing to the proximity of Leeds and Bradford, a large part of the population now finds employment in those cities.

(2) The industries are numerous, and include those belonging to the stone trade, cloth trade (worsted spinning and weaving, and dyeing), leather trade (tanning, bleaching), soap manufacture, steam laundry work, etc., etc. There has been no shortage of work, in fact many places have been unable to obtain their ordinary number of employees.

Vital Statistics.—Births numbered 110; 59 males, 51 females. Six were illegitimate. The resulting birth-rate is 11·0 per 1,000 of the population. This compares unfavourably with that for England and Wales, which for the same period is 18·5.

Deaths numbered 107; 47 males, 60 females. The resulting death-rate of 11·2 compares favourably with that

for England and Wales, viz., 13·8 per 1,000. Working out the average death-rate for this district per annum during the the past 10 years, I find this is 12 per 1000. The causes of death are shown in the appended table. A noticeable feature is the absence of any deaths from zymotic diseases.

The severe epidemic of Influenza accounted for 17 deaths; the victims were chiefly of those in middle life. Where a tubercular tendency was present the mortality was greater, and pregnancy in two cases proved a serious complication.

There was one death under 12 months of age.

There were four deaths above 12 months and under 15 years of age; 10 deaths above 15 and under 65 years of age; 2 deaths over 65 years of age.

Pulmonary and other forms of Tuberculosis accounted for 31 deaths. 16 of these, however, died in the Dean Head Sanatorium, and have therefore been deducted in calculating this mortality. 14 died from Pulmonary and 1 from Tuberculous Meningitis.

There were 2 deaths under 2 years of age; 3 deaths over 15 years and under 25 years of age; 6 deaths over 25 and under 65 years of age; 4 deaths over 45 and under 65 years of age.

Of this number 6 were males and 9 females. Most of these cases were chronic in character, belonging to well known tuberculous families, and with two exceptions had received treatment under the West Riding Scheme, having had either sanatorium or dispensary treatment.

Infantile Mortality rate.—Seven infants died before reaching the age of twelve months. The causes of death were:—Influenza 1; Diarrhœa 1; Convulsions 1; Bronchitis 1; Congenital Debility 3. The resulting death-rate is equal to 63 per 1,000 children born alive. That for England and Wales is 89 per 1,000 born alive. Averaging the infantile mortality rate for this district covering the past ten years, I find it equals 74 per 1,000. This is much below the average of that for England and Wales.

The amount of Poor Law Relief granted throughout the year was £469. Hospital relief is obtained in the adjoining cities of Leeds and Bradford—the General Infirmary, the Women and Children's Hospital, and the Maternity Hospital of the former city being our greatest benefactors. During the past year, in consequence of the long waiting lists of these hospitals and the difficulty therefore of obtaining early admission, hardships often occurred to patients belonging to this district. It is one's common experience to find, except where the case is very urgent, that several months of waiting must elapse before admission can take place, often to the great detriment of the patient. For a period of time the Leeds Maternity Hospital was closed to Horsforth patients. The difficulty of obtaining nurses or even domestic help of any kind aggravated by a state of overcrowding of many of the homes, particularly during the fearful epidemic of Influenza, made the past year memorable in many ways from a medical point of view I regret more than I can describe my great disappointment that a scheme for the provision of a small hospital to memorialise the War and those who gave their lives, prepared and liberally subscribed to by an influential Committee and supported by the Council, a scheme which incidentally would have proved invaluable to the inhabitants of this district, was rejected at a Town's Meeting, when those inexperienced in the difficulties which are constantly present, were influenced by misguided and prejudiced advice to give an adverse vote.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

Water Supply.—This is in the hands of the Urban District Authority. It comprises (1) a catchment area on the north side of the township, on land occupied by the Golf Club, and other adjoining. (2) Three reservoirs. (3) A bore-hole pumping station in Scotland Lane. The supply has been sufficient for the needs of the district, but in consequence of a furred-up main the deficiency to the higher portion of the district, existent for some considerable time, has become greater and particularly about Lane Head the supply has been very poor—often failing altogether for several hours during the day. To remedy this a contract for a new main extending from the Waterworks to Lane Head has now

been let, and the work is now progressing. Several satisfactory analyses of the main supply have been made during the year.

A private well supplying houses in Woodside Hill having been reported defective, the town's supply has now been conveyed to the various houses there. The town's well in Parkside still supplies the needs of a few houses in that neighbourhood.

Drainage and Sewerage.—The sewerage works constructed in 1911 are well managed and continue to work efficiently. The effluent produced by a system of sedimentation tanks and various distributing devices upon septic beds is very satisfactory and finally enters the River Aire.

Closet Accommodation. — This is chiefly by water carriage. W.C.s number 1396, and there are 18 waste water closets. The number of privies and covered middens still remaining is 127, and of this number some are in course of conversion and the rest wherever possible, will be dealt with shortly. Eleven reconstruction into W.C.s took place during the past year.

Scavenging.—For the past 4 years this work has been done directly by the Council's employees. The difficulty of obtaining good labour has been great and the efficiency has consequently suffered. By the adoption of ashbins to replace old ashpits where conversion has taken place, it is hoped to lessen this work considerably.

The Destructor is no longer in use. This again is due to the impossibility of obtaining the right class of employee. Certain necessary repairs require to be done. The quality of refuse has rendered the combustibility difficult, so I hope as a temporary expedient a tip has been purchased in Swaine Wood and all refuse, unless of manurial value, is being sent there.

Sanitary Inspections of District.—These number 986 and include 136 where informal notices were given, and 11 in which statutory notices were required. Of this number 125 of the former and 10 of the latter were complied with There are no common lodging houses and no underground sleeping rooms in this district. The only offensive trade is a soap works—the general condition of which is satisfactory.

Schools.—There are five. The sanitary condition of these is good. In February, when the violence of Influenza was at its worst, it was deemed advisable to close all the schools for three weeks. In addition, Featherbank Lane School (Infants Dept.) was again closed in December, because of the prevalence of Whooping Cough and Chicken Pox, which together had seriously reduced the attendance.

Food: Milk Supply.—This was generally good, though some shortage (never serious) was experienced. Infants and invalids were always well supplied. For a time one delivery per day was the custom, but now most milkmen make two rounds. Under the Mothers' and Childrens' Order of 1918 milk has been supplied free or at cost price in a few instances. There are 36 cowkeepers and a total of about 340 cows. The cowsheds number 42 and are mostly in good condition. There was no action with regard to tuberculous milk. The number of inspections made was 123.

Bakehouses number nine—all in good order. There is only one underground bakehouse.

Slaughter-houses number twelve. Most of these have been altered in recent years. Throughout the year killing has been done in the most up-to-date slaughter-house by arrangements made with the butchers during the period of "meat control." Two hundred and sixty pounds of beef and nine pounds of butter were found to be unfit for human consumption. There were no prosecutions under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act.

Prevalence of Infectious Diseases.—The notifications numbered 58 and are shown as follows: Diphtheria 5; Erysipelas 1; Scarlet Fever 4; Pulmonary Tuberculosis 12; Other Forms 1; Measles 17; Whooping Cough 2; Pneumonia 9; Chicken Pox 4; Mumps 3.

Diphtheria.—These occurred in Nov. and Dec.—four houses being involved. There was no connection between the various foci. With one exception the cases were sent to the Isolation Hospital. Premises and clothing were disinfected by the Sanitary Inspector—the latter by super-heated stream. Diphtheritic Anti-Toxin is supplied free to necessitous cases. There were no deaths.

Scarlet Fever.—Four single cases occurred in different houses. These were notified in the last quarter of the year and there was no common source discoverable. Three cases were admitted into the Isolation Hospital. Disinfections on recovery took place as in Diphtheria.

Pulmonary and other Tubercular Diseases.—These numbered 13—12 of the former and 1 of the latter. With one exception these cases came under the supervision of the West Riding County Council. After death disinfection of bedroom and clothing is usually carried out.

Measles and Whooping Cough still remain on the list of notifiable diseases adopted by the Sanitary Authority. The former disease was notified in 17 cases. These occurred in different parts of the district, distributed over several months of the year. Without the necessary staff to follow up these notifications it has so far been impossible to derive any great advantage in preventing the spread of this disease. I hope, however, that the health visitor about to be appointed will be of great help in future epidemics. There was no mortality from this disease.

The latter was notified in two cases—both separately imported.

Pneumonia.—Nine cases were notified, though I have reason to think that more occurred. Several of these were complications of Influenza, and in consequence were more serious. The greatest difficulty was experienced in adequately treating some of these cases, for often there were other patients in the home at the same time,and beyond the help of the district nurses and that of neighbours, little help was obtainable during the severity of the epidemic. I have in my mind an instance of this sort where every member of the family (nine in number) was down at the same time; two had pneumonia and yet a nurse was unprocurable. Nothing short of institutional or hospital treatment is called for in such cases.

Maternity and Child Welfare.—The only practising midwife, Mrs. Squires, has retired owing to advancing years. Since the adoption of the Midwives Act she has done good and faithful work, not always for reward. Her strong personality—her zeal for cleanliness, fresh air and common sense—will long be remembered by those who have had her help.

Throughout the war she did much of the work which would otherwise have been done by medical men. With regard to the future I feel that steps should be taken to procure another midwife. She should live in the centre of the Township, and if at the same time provision could be made for two or three beds for maternity cases in the same house, it would prove a great boon to the district, for sufficient circumstances have arisen in late years to make this matter urgent.

Notification of Births Act.—This is carried out by the Local Authority, who, at the annual cost of £20 secure that the district nurses visit all babies as soon as possible after birth Comparatively few of the mothers here go out to work, so that infant life is generally well cared for. That this is so is evidenced by the unusually low infantile death-rate about which I have previously spoken. These arrangements however are not ideal, for the district nurses are too much occupied with their ordinary work and only in abnormal cases can further visits be made. After the unsuccessful attempt (mentioned in my last annual report) to procure a whole time nurse who would along with other duties carry out this work, the whole question has been in abeyance until recently. I am, however, now in a position to state that the appointment of a suitable nurse has now been effected, and that in conjunction with the West Riding it has been arranged that her whole time will be occupied in looking after child and maternity welfare including school clinic—which is about to be established in the Mechanics' Institute—and in health visiting. I hope the nurse will live in the district, for if so she will become a more important addition to the sanitary staff.

There was no case of puerperal fever or of ophthalmia neonatorum reported during the past year.

Sanitary Administration.—The staff consists of one Sanitary Inspector. Isolation for the more serious infectious diseases is provided in the Wharfedale Isolation Hospital at Menston. Most of our cases are now treated there. As the patients are conveyed by a motor ambulance the journey is less formidable than formerly.

Housing.—The number of houses is 2,391, and of these about ⅔ represent those used by the working classes. No

new houses were completed in 1919, though there are four in course of erection. An owner attempted to make an old disused house again habitable but as he would not comply to the regulations required this was not done. On the suggestion of the Council another long disused house is being made habitable. Overcrowding is common and until further accommodation is found cannot be dealt with. Two houses were pronounced to be unfit for habitation. One has since been repaired the other being too delapidated. There are no "unhealthy areas." There are no bye-laws relating to houses let in lodgings, or tents, vans, etc.

State aided housing schemes include (1) provision for 200 houses on land recently acquired by the Council for the purpose, lying between Cragg Hill and Broadgate Lane representing 67 acres in extent. Already plans have been submitted and approved for 112 of these houses and specifications and quantities for the contracts are being prepared. (2) The Horsforth Co-partnership Tenants' Association—a public utility society—has made arrangements for the purchase of 25 acres in Hall Lane, and as a commencement tenders for 16 houses have been let, and at the time of presenting this report some of these are in course of erection.

Twelve houses were inspected under section 17 of the 1909 Housing Act. Ten were declared to be not reasonably fit for human habitation. ~~Twelve~~ Three have since been put in order. There were no demolition orders and no dwelling houses were demolished voluntarily.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

HENRY BAILEY.

Causes of Death in Horsforth Urban District, 1919.

Causes of Death.	Males	Females
All Causes	47	60
Influenza	6	11
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	6	8
Tuberculous Meningitis		1
Cancer, malignant disease	5	6
Rheumatic Fever	1	1
Organic Heart Disease	2	4
Bronchitis	5	6
Pneumonia (all forms)	2	4
Diarrhœa, etc. (under 2 years)	1	
Appendicitis and Typhlitis	1	
Nephritis and Bright's Disease		2
Congenital Debility, etc.		1
Violence, apart from suicide	2	1
Other defined diseases	16	15
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age	3	4

Births.

Legitimate	53	51
Illegitimate	6	
Total ...	59	51

Population for Birth Rate	9883
Population for Death Rate	9487